

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1975

Ex-Officer Tells of Infiltrating

By Ronald Kessler

Washington Post Staff Writer

A former D.C. police intelligence unit officer said this week he was assigned to investigate the women's liberation movement to determine if it was under the influence of Socialists.

Jim D. Binsted, who was detailed to the intelligence unit for four months in 1970, said he had his wife infiltrate local feminist groups and make reports that he dictated to the police.

The police had particular interest, Binsted said, in the activities and beliefs of Tina Hobson, who was a leader of the local liberation movement and was trying to get a bill passed by Congress to give equal rights to women.

Binsted said the police wanted to show that Mrs. Hobson was under Socialist influence to prove that her husband, Julius Hobson Sr., was a Socialist.

Julius Hobson was then a former D.C. school board member who was an antiwar and civil rights leader. He is now an at-large member of the D.C. City Council.

The assignment to probe women's liberation was one of a number that Binsted said he carried out as an undercover intelligence officer.

Binsted, 33, said he left the police department in 1972 after a four-year career because of dissatisfaction with what he said was a police policy of

judging an officer's ability by the number of arrests he makes.

Some of Binsted's activities were reported by The Washington Post in 1973. In a recent interview in his Cabin John home, Binsted, now a private detective, revealed details of other surveillances he conducted while in the intelligence unit.

Binsted made the disclosures after The Post quoted an informed source this week as saying the intelligence unit kept files on the personal lives of antiwar activists and local politicians. The files, the source said, contained information on political beliefs, sexual activities, and drug use.

Assistant Police Chief Theodore R. Zanders subsequently confirmed that files were kept on political figures but denied they included information on drug use or sex activities. He later said the files, which have since been shredded, were on persons who later became politicians.

Zanders did not return telephone calls from a reporter yesterday. Other high police officials, informed of Binsted's allegations, had no comment.

Binsted said that while in the intelligence unit, he dressed in hippie clothes, carried no police identification, and received assignments and made reports only by mail or over a telephone number that was not part of the police exchange.



By Joe Heiberger—The Washington Post

Dorie and Jim Binsted tell of undercover work at their Cabin John home.

Those who answered the telephone, he said, did not identify themselves. Binsted said he was told by his superiors that the information was being funneled along with data from other

police and intelligence agencies to an undisclosed, central location.

At first, Binsted said, the police appeared to have a particular interest in

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what he called politicians and celebrities.

His first assignment, he said, was to monitor a talk by Sargent Shriver at a closed meeting of VISTA volunteers. Shriver was then chairman of a committee formed to help elect Democrats to Congress.

But Binsted said he raised objections to such activities and once asked his anonymous assigning officer if Binsted was supposed to be part of the Gestapo. "I was considered a renegade," he said.

As a result, he said, he was assigned to less controversial areas that included following antiwar leaders, infiltrating the women's liberation movement, and sitting in on classes at universities.

Binsted said he was never asked to report on sexual activities or drug use. However, he said he was told by other police personnel at the time that others in the intelligence unit were concentrating on reporting homosexual activities and drug use by those under surveillance.

Binsted said he made dozens of reports on the women's liberation movement. Although he attended some meetings where liberation leaders spoke, much of the material was provided by Binsted's wife, Dorie, he said.

Binsted was told his wife would be

paid for her work, but she never was, he said.

Mrs. Binstead said she joined a women's group at George Washington University and found some of its leaders were also members of a Socialist group.

Referring to Mrs. Hobson, Binsted said, "They really wanted to get on her. They were trying to involve her in socialist groups to show that he was (a Socialist)."

"They really didn't like Hobson," Binsted added. "Whenever he was speaking publicly, they wanted us to be there. He was against the war, and he was pushing for black identity," he said.

Mrs. Binsted said her instructions were to find out "what she (Mrs. Hobson) says and who she hangs around with and what does she think."

Mrs. Binsted said she found that Mrs. Hobson wanted to improve women's jobs in the federal government if they had the required skills. She said Mrs. Hobson also advocated more government aid to day care centers.

Mrs. Hobson, now a project manager in the Federal Energy Administration, said Friday she and her husband often joked about the possibility they were being watched by the government. But she said she never had any evidence of it.

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At the time of the surveillance, she said, she was trying to marshal support for a congressional bill that would provide women with equal rights.

Mrs. Hobson said no one was excluded from the liberation movement. "If they were Republicans, that was fine; if they were Socialists, that was fine, too," she said.

Hobson has said he was asked by the FBI to act as an informant at the 1964

Democratic National Convention. Hobson said he took the \$200 the FBI offered but never reported anything or had any contact with the bureau during the Atlantic City, N.J., convention.

Binstead said he was told to tape record a speech to be given by Shriver, former U.S. ambassador to France, to find out if he made any "anti-administration comments."

Binsted said he trailed such antiwar leaders as Rennie Davis, Tom Hayden,

Jane Fonda, Abbie Hoffman, and Jerry Rubin.

"When they were in town," he said, "(the police) wanted to know where they were staying and what they were doing."

Binsted said he often informed the police of potential violence based on information he obtained when he infiltrated the antiwar movement. On the basis of this, he said, the police should have been able to determine whether to keep officers working overtime.